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SUBJECT: KAZAKHSTAN FY 2009 COUNTRY TEAM ASSESSMENT OF 1206 FUNDING PROPOSAL

11. (U) Sensitive but unclassified. Not for internet distribution.

12. (U) SUMMARY: The U.S. Embassy Astana Country Team and Ambassador approve the Kazakhstan Fiscal Year 2009 1206 funding proposals. The two separate proposals are for equipment and training for the Kazakhstan Peacekeeping Brigade (KAZBRIG) of the Airmobile Forces Command, Naval Special Operations Forces (NAVSOF) of the Western Regional Command, and the Air Defense Forces. The proposal for KAZBRIG includes 450 night vision goggles (NVGs), nuclear, chemical, biological (NBC) personnel protective equipment, and associated training and transportation. The Caspian region proposal includes a mobile command center for the NAVSOF and Huey II helicopters and related support equipment and training for the Air Defense Forces to support NAVSOF. The KAZBRIG proposal is estimated at \$6.56 million and the Caspian region proposal is estimated at \$29.43 million. The proposals are consistent with the requests of Kazakhstan's Ministry of Defense (MOD), CENTOM's Theatre Security Cooperation Goals, and the U.S. Embassy Astana Mission Strategic Plan. END SUMMARY

13. (U) KAZBRIG requires NVGs and NBC equipment to achieve interoperability with U.S. and NATO forces. At exercise Steppe Eagle 2008, a NATO interoperability evaluation team observed shortfalls in KAZBRIG's ability to operate at night and protect its soldiers and equipment inside the NBC threat envelope. 1206 funding is identified as most appropriate in this case to achieve KAZBRIG interoperability in the quickest manner. Kazakhstan's participation in Operation IRAQI FREEDOM ended in October of 2008. Assisting KAZBRIG achieve interoperability is very important as the Government of Kazakhstan considers alternate missions to support the U.S. in the Global War on Terror (GWOT).

14. (U) The Western Regional Command requires a mobile command center for NAVSOF and the Air Defense Forces require additional Huey II helicopters to complete Ministry of Defense (MOD) fielding of a Caspian Quick Reaction Force. Kazakhstan recognizes a significant capability gap in its ability to protect, defend, and/or react to terrorist events against American and Kazakh citizens and critical petroleum infrastructure in the North Caspian region. The FY 2008 1206 allocation for Kazakhstan included approximately \$10 million worth of equipment (fast boats, NVGs, dive equipment, etc.) for NAVSOF to begin creating the capability to close this gap. This FY 2009 proposal would complete the purchase of equipment necessary for Kazakhstan to create a unit capable of deterring terrorist activity, as well as quickly reacting to any events in the North Caspian region.

15. (U) OMC and United States Central Command (USCENTCOM) have worked closely with KAZBRIG since its creation and it is anticipated that introduction of this equipment will not affect KAZBRIG's force

structure. However, the stand-up of NAVSOF capability and additional Huey-II helicopters will affect the force structure of the Western Regional Command and Air Defense Forces respectively. The Western Regional Command designated NAVSOF Unit 41443 to receive the Caspian Quick Reaction mission and associated equipment. MOD plans to have 200 special operations soldiers preparing, training or standing ready to conduct operational missions. Additionally, Military Unit 53975 of the Air Defense Forces currently operates two Huey II helicopters at Pervomaika Airfield outside of Almaty. MOD plans to move these helicopters to the Caspian area to directly support NAVSOF when the unit receives its full allocation of aircraft.

¶6. (U) Kazakhstan has good relations with its neighbors. Neighboring nations will support an increase in the level of security within Kazakhstan and the North Caspian.

¶7. (U) With proper training, technicians from Kazakhstan should be able to properly operate and maintain all equipment included in these proposals. The Air Defense Forces already operate two Huey II helicopters. A continuation and increase in OMC's existing training programs would ensure more effective operation of the helicopters. Additionally, the FY 2008 1206 purchase included NVGs for the NAVSOF forces. OMC would ensure that training for KAZBRIG NVGs is similar to the training planned for NAVSOF.

¶8. (U) Human rights vetting will be conducted for all training as required by the Arms Export Control Act and will be periodically re-evaluated over time. U.S. Embassy, Astana has selected a Defense Institute of International Legal Studies (DIILS) seminar for human rights training. This seminar is scheduled for the second quarter of FY 2009. OMC Astana is currently working with staff from

DIILS and coordinating final details for upcoming seminars. Seminars will be held at MOD's National Defense University in Shchuchinsk, Kazakhstan. Additional seminars will be held at KAZBRIG headquarters in Almaty, Kazakhstan. Additionally, Leahy vetting occurs for all security assistance training activities with Kazakhstan. OMC works closely with the Regional Security Office, Legal Attache and Political/Economic sections to ensure all Kazakh trainees meet Leahy requirements. This certification process will continue to ensure compliance with the Foreign Assistance Act.

¶9. (U) OMC Kazakhstan will include end use monitoring of these items within our larger end use monitoring and security cooperation plan. Additionally, OMC Kazakhstan will conduct at a minimum a semi-annual 100% inventory and inspection of all NVGs and inspect all storage facility documents related to accountability of NVGs. When training teams are on hand, they will be tasked to inspect the night vision devices during the course of their duties as well as inspecting security procedures. OMC will keep serial numbers for all night vision devices on file in case of theft or loss.

¶10. (U) POC for this memorandum is Lieutenant Colonel James G. Yentz, Chief, Office of Military Cooperation, Office, tel +7 7172 702100 Ext. 2321, email: yentzj@state.gov or KazakhstanOMC@state.gov.

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